

The Components of a Security Management System

Figure 1.1 shows some of the key components of the Security Management System. In this section, we describe the purpose of each component.

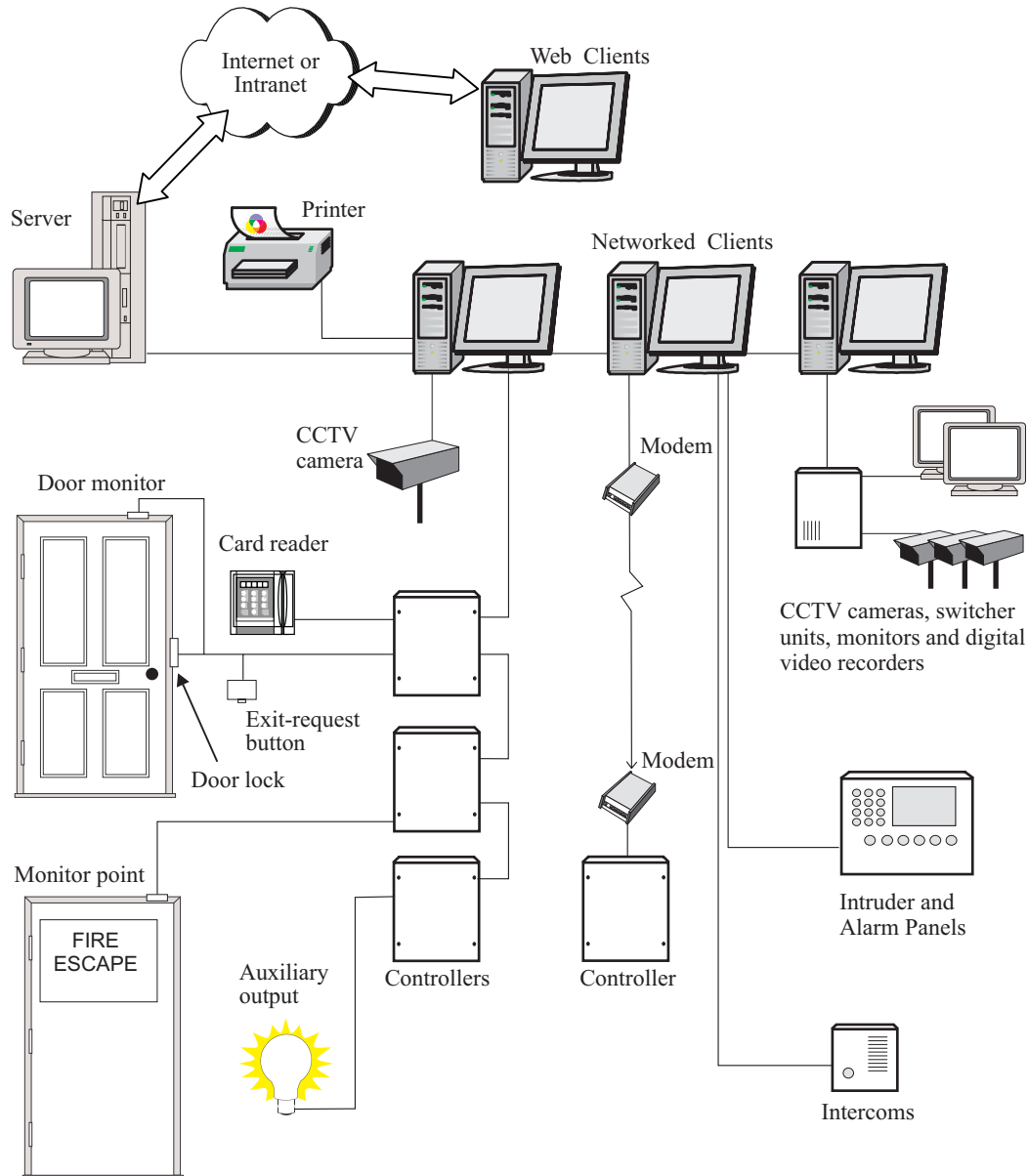


Figure 1.1: Components of Access Control

Card Readers

Card readers enable people to perform access-control transactions. The card reader reads the person's card number and passes this information to the node, which decides whether or not to grant access, i.e. to unlock the door.

Each reader is dedicated to a specific door, and therefore is located close to the door, to allow the card holder to open the door before it re-locks.

Exit-Request Buttons

When pressed, exit-request buttons release a door's lock. They are normally located next to an exit to allow people free access to leave the premises.

Door Lock

The door's lock is released following a successful access-control transaction or by pressing an exit-request button. After a predefined length of time (normally a matter of seconds), the door is re-locked automatically. The door can be permanently unlocked, then re-locked by scheduled commands (see page 9-3), which may be particularly useful for busy periods of the day.

Door Monitors

Each door has a door-monitor contact, which detects when the door is open and when it is closed. This information enables the node to determine whether, for example, the door has been forced or kept open too long.

The Server and Client PCs

The server, which should never be switched off, is the PC that holds and manages the Security Management System's databases. All data about the Security Management System, including card holders, access rights and alarms is stored in the server's databases. The server also performs various management functions, such as to process transactions made at access-control readers, start conditional or scheduled commands across controllers and initiate scheduled reports.

Other PCs known as "clients" can be connected to the server via a network. Clients provide the user interface to the Security Management Software. They enable you to carry out tasks such as to set up card holders, specify access rights, print badges, view alarms, produce reports and manage the system. They also provide the communications ports to the security management hardware located around the building, such as the nodes that operate the doors and readers.

There can be many clients in use simultaneously, up to a limit determined by the system purchased. The number of clients required depends mostly on the number of nodes and other security management hardware in use, and the number of users who need to use the Security Management Software. In a large system, many clients may be required, each for a different purpose. Each user of the Security Management Software has a set of login privileges, which determine the range of screens that are available and the functions that can be carried out.

Alarms can be sent to any of the clients according to the time of day, day of the week or even on holiday dates. This allows, for example, alarms to be displayed on the receptionist's PC during the day, then on the guard's PC during the night.

Some clients can be designated for special purposes. "Web clients", available with the optional Web Access Module, enable remote connection over the Internet or Intranet.

Printer

A printer enables reports or the currently-displayed screen to be printed. Any Windows-compatible printer can be used. Specialist badge printers can be used for badge printing and optional card encoding.